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## The Challenge to Educate: An Account of Inaugurating a Catholic School in Tanzania

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*In this article, the author examines how some of the tenets of Catholic social teaching (dignity of the human person, seeking the common good, and preferential option for the poor and vulnerable) along with the notion of integral formation (a principal belief of Catholic education), helped form a perspective on development that counterposed the neoliberal understandings of development he encountered from government officials as he set about opening a Catholic secondary school in Tanzania. After tracing the various strains of influence, including the thought of Julius Nyerere, Tanzania's first president, the article makes use of the fruits of an analysis of data to propose a set of principles to those inaugurating educational projects in the developing world. The article concludes by suggesting potentially wider application.*

### Keywords

Catholic social teaching, integral formation, development, Julius Nyerere

**I**n 2009, I left an academic position and moved to central Tanzania, where I joined a team of other Jesuits planning the opening of a coeducational boarding secondary school. The Jesuit province there had received a generous donation from a family foundation for this purpose, but faced a difficult challenge: It had the material resources necessary to open the school, but not the necessary personnel. Because of my experience as a principal of a Jesuit high school and my research on the professional development of teachers, superiors identified me as the most suitable Jesuit to serve as the school's first headmaster. I would be responsible for registering the school with Tanzania's Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MOEVT), establishing school policies and procedures, hiring faculty and staff, and recruiting and admitting qualified students.

In fact, my chief responsibility was a less tangible one: engendering the ethos of the Jesuit tradition in the new Catholic school. This proved to be a

much greater challenge than I had initially envisioned. Soon after my arrival, I was confronted with the reality that my notions of the mission of a Catholic school in a developing country were at odds with the designs for the school set by the government officials and bureaucrats who would play an important role in its opening. Over time, I came to realize that these differences regarding the purpose of schooling were “rich points,” signaling differences between the Tanzanian public servants and me, differences worthy of attention as a research focus (Agar, 1996).

In the pages that follow, I explore these differences with the conviction that without appropriate attention and analysis such as I propose to provide, important decisions affecting apostolic commitments like beginning a school rely too heavily on implicit or assumed problem identification. The case study that follows is an exercise in applied qualitative research; its intention is to put forward for consideration ideas to guide decision-making regarding Catholic educational projects in the developing world where the neoliberal policies of the World Bank (WB) and its sister institution, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), hold sway.

In the first part of the article, I trace my emerging understanding of the differences between the officials with whom I dealt and me. After examining how I came to realize both the nature and the significance of these rich points, I trace the postcolonial history of Tanzania that explains in part the stance of the civil servants. In the following section, I consider the influence of Catholic social teaching (CST) and the thought of Julius Kambarage Nyerere, Tanzania’s first president, on my own stance. Ultimately, I formulate five principles to be considered when establishing Catholic educational institutions in the developing world.

### Exploring a Rich Point

During my three years working to open the secondary school in Tanzania, I kept a personal journal and regularly published reflections and updates on a blog meant to keep family and friends informed of the progress of the school. At the time, I did not refer to the journal as an ethnographic or research journal because I did not foresee writing up the experience. It was simply a personal journal in which I regularly recorded my experiences and reflections. My training as an ethnographer certainly affected the sort of journal I kept; and, in reviewing the journal now, it is clear that, whatever my intentions, it can properly be termed an ethnographic journal if only because my writing served to keep a detailed account of events as they unfolded.

The journal, my blog entries, and other artifacts like photographs are data that can be used for an autoethnography. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) provided a succinct description of this approach to research:

Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno) (Ellis, 2004; Holman Jones, 2005). This approach challenges canonical ways of doing research and representing others (Spry, 2001) and treats research as a political, socially-just and socially-conscious act (Adams & Holman Jones, 2008). A researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography. (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 1)

The nature of the research (namely, that I backed into it rather than planned it) commends this approach, which echoes Peshkin's (1988) counsel that qualitative researchers critically examine their position vis-à-vis the subject under study. Peshkin (1998) challenged scholars not only to admit their subjectivities but also to appreciate, pay heed to, and examine subjectivity as an embedded asset in their work.

As I began coding the data (principally the journal and blog entries) for common domains and relevant categories, I realized just how close to the data I was. The journal and the blog were in fact themselves analytic tools, and explanatory patterns and ideas had emerged in them as I took account of events. As I considered the data, I felt very much like the researcher described by Malinowski (1922):

[T]he more problems he brings with him into the field, the more he is in the habit of molding his theories according to facts, and of seeing facts in their bearing upon theory, the better he is equipped for the work. (p. 9)<sup>1</sup>

The journal and the blog entries themselves were dialogs between data and ideas. The analysis became an exercise in what Smith (1978) referred to as “skimming the cream,” making more explicit ideas that had been developed unsystematically and shaping new ideas through the iterative process of

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<sup>1</sup>Here and elsewhere noninclusive language is from the original text and is not the preferred word choice of the author or editors of *The Journal of Catholic Education*.

questioning, looking out for answers, refining original questions in light of unfolding data, raising new questions, seeking new answers, and so forth (Bassett, 2010).

### Considering Pericopes from a Journal

On September 29, 2009, I wrote the following as part of a blog entry:

We are enthralled by the myth of progress. The myth of progress simply states that the human project necessarily (there's that word again!) can and will continue to march toward utopia, step-by-(more/better/improved)-step. A certain sort of functionalist and technical rationality serves this myth in our present era, and it informs what we now think is the purpose of schooling.

In reviewing my journal, I noticed that this blog entry followed on the heels of an encounter with a government official regarding the school's opening. Mr. Massawe<sup>2</sup> was very happy to see the school buildings going up and often arrived on campus unannounced, eager for me to update him on the progress of the building.

The following is an extract from my journal entry for September 14, 2009, after having met with him:

Massawe makes me feel uncomfortable. He is so enthusiastic about what we are doing, but we haven't even begun doing anything yet—other than start to put up buildings. It is an uncomfortable situation. At every turn he thanks me for my contribution to Tanzania's development, but as he goes on about this and the "national project" I always begin to feel uncomfortable. Whose project is this, anyway? How do we better communicate what we're doing? Do we even know what we're doing?

What I do know is that my goals do not line up so easily with Massawe's. As I told S. [a local Jesuit], "For them it's as if you 'just add education and stir'."

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<sup>2</sup>Common Tanzanian names replace the actual names as they appear in the journal. Text set off by square brackets indicates clarifying amendments to the journal text and editorial commentary.

There's this discourse of development that sees education as a driving force, that overstates schooling as a causal factor. I'm not sure of that. At all.

So what am I doing here? What are we doing here?

The questions that I end with might seem existential in nature at first glance, but in fact they were ethical. The dilemma I faced was becoming apparent; it touched on the most foundational question relative to formal education: What was our purpose?

Over the course of the next weeks and months, I had multiple interactions with other government officials who communicated the same message of gratitude for helping the nation's development efforts. All of these encounters were instances of the same discomfort as those with Massawe about the opening of the school. For instance, the following journal entry is typical of my reaction to the many encounters I had with Mr. Mapunda, another official with whom I frequently interacted. This entry was written a few months before we welcomed our first students in January 2011:

Mapunda could not be any more helpful. When I asked to see him today, he made himself immediately available and even took the time to accompany me to [a government office] to introduce me to the director. (chief? administrator? manager? –there are so many different titles in government, I don't have a clue what his is).

Mapunda continues to note the important role we are playing in the SEDP [Secondary Education Development Plan]. Modernization and development of society – the most repeated phrase from his mouth.

I'm always a little ill-at-ease with Mapunda because I think he thinks I can deliver more than I can and that the school will be some sort of magical catalyst for MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT. It sets us all up for a lot of disappointment, I fear.

Obviously I want the school to be successful, but – ON WHOSE TERMS?

I ended the entry after my encounter with Mr. Massawe with two questions: “So what am I doing here? What are we doing here?” And now I end the entry regarding Mr. Mapunda with another: “On whose terms?” The questions are expressions of the difficult situation I found myself in. I had arrived to Tanzania with convictions about what would characterize the school and about its purpose. The irony was that my convictions were based in large part on my knowledge of *Education for Self-Reliance* (ESR; 2004b), an important policy document written by Nyerere in 1967, six years after Tanzania’s independence from the United Kingdom, as a blueprint for the development of education in Tanzania in the postcolonial era. In addition to self-reliance, ESR advanced the idea that education had to work for the common good, foster cooperation, and promote equality. I had become familiar with ESR because I had used it as a companion piece to Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) in courses I had taught in the United States.

My most difficult meetings were with Madam Mazengo, an official who played a very important role in the school’s registration. In a country in which judgments are constantly made based on a projected trajectory of progress, she insisted that everything had to be in place before she would forward the registration petition. For instance, despite the fact that the MOEVT first-year science curriculum did not prescribe any experiments, Mazengo insisted that the science laboratories be completed and outfitted with materials before the school’s opening.

Though overly particular, Mazengo was enthusiastic about the school’s opening. As with other officials, her expressions of gratitude for the school were also expressions of hope, as evidenced in what I wrote about a meeting during which she stressed the importance of science:

Went with S. to meet with Madam Mazengo today. She insists that the labs have to be fully operational before she will forward the application to the MOEVT. I can’t convince her...She did take the opportunity—even while refusing to proceed—to underscore her thanks for what the facilities will be. She wants us to focus on science and technology because TZ [Tanzania] has such a dearth of citizens with sci/tech skills—“assets needed for innovations” as she noted.

I feel churlish—or at least petulant—I want the school registered, but I don’t want our students to be thought of as assets. How to be true to my convictions and serve the needs as they’re presented? How do I serve these two masters? Is it a lack of creativity? Of flexibility?

Again my journal entry ends with questions that capture the dilemma I faced. I arrived in Tanzania with a vision for what the contributions of the school would be. I had my own notions of its role, and they did not focus on the significance of education and training as the key to participation in the new global economy, as proposed by the human capital approach to economic development (Becker, 1994). Rather, my conceptions of the role and purpose of the school had a *very* different foundation. Instead of conceiving the school as a means to form students into assets to serve the projects of the already-powerful, I saw myself, a foreigner, as following in the footsteps of Nyerere, who insisted in ESR (2004b) that schooling must serve as a means by which men and women learn to deal critically with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. Nyerere envisioned school as an aid for forming young people to take such a critical stance, to see themselves not as objects of instruction but as subjects of their lives, thus effecting a social transformation marked by social, cultural, and economic equity.

When I read a monograph published by the global consulting group McKinsey & Company that a senior Tanzanian government official sent me, the contrast between my principles regarding development and the principles of the public servants crystallized. My reading *Lions on the Move: The Progress and Potential of African Economies* (2010) was an occasion to begin to make sense of all the encounters I had previously written about. In a note accompanying the monograph, this official thanked me for the school's contribution to the development of the nation and encouraged me to read the report, noting that "it has everything to do with our – if I can be so bold to use 'our' – project to help develop the nation."

After reading the report, I noted in my journal, "It occurs to me that a striking feature of the language surrounding development used by all these MOEVT folks and other government officials is their economic focus." The McKinsey report illustrated for me how the human capital approach to development envisages development and education's role in it. This approach focuses on the citizens' productive ability measured in terms of the goods and services they produce; the role of education is to increase this productivity. Though this aim is often presented in social terms (for instance, the reduction of poverty), the indicator of success is the economic productivity of the individual, judged in terms of consumption (Walker, 2012). As the McKinsey (2010) report noted relative to education, "If Africa can provide its young

people with the education and skills they need – a major challenge – this large workforce could become a significant engine of global consumption” (p. 19).

My journal entry on the occasion of reading the report was a simple one. It included the quotation from the government official, the quotation from the McKinsey report, and the following words: “*Mwalimu Nyerere, Mtumishi wa Mungu, utuombee*”—Teacher Nyerere, Servant of God, pray for us. (To this day, *Mwalimu*—“Teacher”—is the affectionate title used for Nyerere, who had been a teacher and considered teaching an important aspect of his role as leader.)

### **The Nature of Development and the Purpose of Schooling in Tanzania**

What became clear in my consideration of my blog and journal entries and what is significant relative to the illustrative pericopes presented above is that the principal dissimilarity between me and the government officials whom I encountered was our different understandings of the nature and goals of development and the concomitant understanding of the nature and goals of schooling. The government officials that I dealt with were convinced that education is an effective instrumental means to economic growth. Their concern was for the nation to have better educated workers. They rarely alluded to citizenship except in reference to economic activity.

In what follows, I trace the vision of development propounded by Nyerere and how it came to be replaced by the human capital understanding of development.

### **Development Ideology in Tanzania 1961–1975**

At the time of Tanzanian independence from the United Kingdom in 1961, the government faced the formidable task of nation-building with few of the resources necessary for the undertaking. The national treasury was depleted, and the economy was weak and undeveloped, with virtually no industry. Among the challenges that Nyerere faced at the time of independence was the paucity of Tanzanians with sufficient education to serve in civil service. In a country of approximately nine million people, there were two Tanzanian lawyers, 16 Tanzanian physicians, and one civil engineer (Coulson, 1982). For these reasons, the government’s initial education policy was designed to increase enrollment at the secondary and tertiary levels in order to form citizens for such service.

By the mid-1960s, it was clear that the economic and educational programs of the initial years following independence had not produced the expected outcomes. In 1967, Nyerere and his political party, TANU (Tanganyika African National Union), promulgated the Arusha Declaration (Nyerere, 1967a), a policy document focusing on nation-building policies with a social and economic development strategy. The policies of the Arusha Declaration were founded in large part on *ujamaa*, "familyhood." *Ujamaa* articulated modern socialist principles and a set of values and ways of living considered traditional and typically African.

*Ujamaa* focused less on wealth creation than on ideals like human dignity and social equality. Nyerere (1968d) stressed that human dignity was based on the concept of the human person as subject rather than object. For that reason, he insisted that development focus on people rather than things and that citizens actively participate in and control their own development. To him, the improvement of infrastructure, the increase in agricultural production, and the introduction of light manufacturing were means of development and not ends in themselves. Nyerere was less concerned with Tanzania's GNP than he was with the equitable distribution of wealth, national unity, and development marked by a concern for the citizens' quality of life.

The aims of the *ujamaa* included *kujitegemea*, "self-reliance." *Kujitegemea* stressed the belief that authentic development could be achieved only in the context of full autonomy, and it served as the basis for Nyerere's educational philosophy and its related pedagogical principles. ESR changed the mission of government schools from preparing an elite group for government service to educating a poor rural population for self-sufficiency.

For Nyerere, the purpose of education is to assist people to claim their subjectivity, which he described as "the power of man to use circumstances rather than to be used by them" (Nyerere, 2004a, p. 125). Nyerere emphasized that education should be "for creators, not creatures" (p. 126). The vision of liberatory and social education that he proposed served as an antidote to the attitudes and dispositions cultivated by colonialism:

[Education] has to foster the social goals of living together, and working together, for the common good. It has to prepare our young people to play a dynamic and constructive part in the development of a society in which all members share fairly in the good or bad fortune of the group, and in which progress is measured in terms of human well-being, not prestige buildings, cars, or other such things, whether privately

or publicly owned. Our education must therefore inculcate a sense of commitment to the total community, and help the pupils to accept the values appropriate to our kind of future, not those appropriate to our colonial past. (Nyerere, 2004b, p. 72)

In speeches, policy brochures, and essays, Nyerere repeatedly turned to this notion that education liberates people for cooperation, that the personal and social are intertwined.

The policies set forth in ESR were never fully implemented and had to operate in a context of severe resource shortage and a world orientation to more individualistic and capitalist understandings of the relation of education to development. Despite that, ESR's success is hard to question. Primary school enrollment increased steadily during the late 1960s and 1970s such that by 1982 gross enrollment in primary school was 95%. Likewise, literacy increased from 31% in 1967 to approximately 90% by 1986. By 1984, girls constituted 50% of first-year primary school students and 38% of first-year secondary school students (Vavrus, 2000).

### Development Ideology in Tanzania since 1975

Beginning in the mid-1970s Tanzania suffered a severe economic downturn due to the oil crises of that decade and to the 1978–1979 war with Uganda. The decade's oil crises cost the Tanzanian economy 206 million dollars, the equivalent of 56% of Tanzania's total export earnings. Following the war with Uganda, the Tanzanian economy incurred its greatest losses. Tanzania's GDP growth in 1980 was only 1.2%; its debt increased to 1.3 billion US dollars; inflation reached 30%, and the Tanzanian shilling was devalued by 25% (Mtatifikolo, 2002).

In 1985, Nyerere resigned from the presidency, and in 1986 under the leadership of Ali Hassan Mwinyi the government submitted to the terms of the WB and the IMF and other bilateral donors and undertook economic transformation toward a market economy. Nyerere had promoted independence from ties with such organizations because of his commitment to self-reliance, but with the new government the state-directed policies of *ujamaa* and *kujitegemea* gave way to decentralization and the liberalization of commodity and financial markets as well as other institutional reforms.

The policy adjustments that followed adversely affected educational quality. For instance, the 95% gross enrollment in 1992 fell to 57% by 2000 (Ndulu

& Mutulemwa, 2002). Due to subsequent universal primary education (UPE) goals, the rate has returned to 95%, as reported by the Government of Tanzania. However, the quality of learning has been compromised because of insufficient teachers and material resources. Compared to other countries, Tanzania ranks at the 88th percentile in access; the literacy rate ranks at the 21st percentile (Education Policy and Data Center, 2014).

With the change in leadership and the change in stance toward the WB and the IMF came a change in the understanding of development. No longer did the convictions of Nyerere hold sway. Rather, economically based measures like those of the WB (which figures a nation's development status by dividing the GNP by a country's population) began to have greater influence in setting national policy, including educational policy (Willis, 2011).

In their background paper for the WB's 2013 *World Development Report*, Montenegro and Patrinos (2013) set out to validate earlier research establishing the rate of return to investment in schooling, typically considered in terms of the estimated proportional increase in an individual's labor market earnings due to completing an additional year of schooling. They introduced their topic by presenting a priori assumptions about education's relationship to economic development:

Education is critical for economic growth and poverty reduction. Education systems produce the global economy's workers and expand knowledge. Schooling produces the skills that propel individual labor productivity. A host of social and non-market benefits are also produced by schooling, including but not limited to child well-being, health status, efficiency of consumer choices, fertility, and social capital. The individual contribution of schooling has often been measured by labor market earnings. (p. 2)

The WB sets forth the notion that the expansion of schooling will inevitably bring about the reduction in poverty, economic growth, and national development—"More learning generates more earning" (Walker, 2012, p. 385). However, although educationalists generally agree that there is a relationship between education and development, there is no consensus about the nature of the relationship regarding its tightness or directionality (McGrath, 2010).

The WB has spent years financing public works in developing countries and demanding privatization and deregulation from their governments in return for loans in addition to the adoption of other neoliberal policies that

affect the understanding of the nature and causes of development. Though this influence certainly happens at the level of policy-making, it also affects the local conduct of everyday life. That is to say, in the regular conduct of the business of the Tanzanian government's educational bureaucracy, the notions propounded by organizations like the WB and the IMF are made available to be taken up by government policy-makers, who in turn make them available to be taken up and used by officials and bureaucrats like Massawe, Mapunda, and Mazengo in their everyday interactions with others (Erickson, 2004).

During my time preparing for the opening of the school, I managed to cobble together a section called "Our Context" for the school's student handbook that offered a different vision of schooling, a statement informed by Jesuit educational documents, Catholic social teaching, and the writings of Nyerere:

- Jesuit educational principles prize personal reflection on experience and conversation with others as important sources for learning. The goal of learning is social: Students learn to be "men and women for and with others."
- Education, according to Catholic social teaching, should give students the skills *to review social conditions* incisively; *to make judgments about the conditions under review* in light of such values as dignity, justice, and solidarity; and *to act on these judgments* with the needs of "the least of our brothers and sisters" in mind.
- Servant of God Mwalimu Julius Nyerere was adamant that education must (a) work for the common good, (b) foster co-operation, and (c) promote equality. For him, education was a principal means to self-reliance.

Since my return to the United States, I have continued to consider CST and Nyerere's thought in particular as important resources to articulate the mission of Catholic schooling in a developing country like Tanzania.

### Finding My Way: Catholic Social Teaching and Development

The various questions regarding privileging economic growth that arose in my encounters with Mr. Massawe ("So what am I doing here? What are we doing here?") and Mr. Mapunda ("On whose terms?") and Mrs. Mazengo ("How to be true to my convictions and serve the needs as they're presented?") led me to ask a more fundamental question relative to the role of education in development: What would it be like to have a different starting

point than the economic one, to begin by asking what it means to be human and what it means to live a fully human, dignified life? CST serves as an important resource to begin to answer this question.

At the end of his treatise *On Anger*, Seneca (1996) counseled that “While we live, while we are among human beings, let us cultivate our humanity” (*De Ira*, 3, 43.4; *dum trahimus, dum inter homines sumus, colamus humanitatem*). Human capital is an inappropriate model for schooling in general and Catholic schooling in particular because it does not focus on the well-being of the human person or the cultivation of humanity. The dissatisfaction I had regarding the interactions with government officials had less to do with their focus on economic growth than with how—relative to schooling—they privileged this growth over a more all-embracing notion of development as the cultivation of humanity. Their visions of development were too materialistic; and their understanding of the human person as *homo economicus*, the self-interested human, seemed reductionist (Persky, 1995).

Development aimed at producing consumers, as suggested by the McKinsey report, (2010) is deficient because it understands the human person solely in terms of economics and the satisfaction of material needs. John Paul II addressed the insufficiency of consumption as a proper indicator of development in *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987):

To ‘have’ objects and goods does not in itself perfect the human subject, unless it contributes to the maturing and enrichment of that subject’s ‘being,’ that is to say unless it contributes to the realization of the human vocation as such. (para. 28)

CST proposes an alternative to the reductionist understanding of the purpose of development proposed by the human capital approach: the “integral development of the human person” (*Centesimus Annus*, 1991, para. 42) and the cultivation of human agency.

Contrary to the preeminence that the human capital approach gives to economic concerns, in discussions of policy, CST emphasizes what is happening to the people—not what is happening to the economy (Henriot, 2007). Pope Paul VI articulated this alternative point of departure in his encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (1967):

Organized programs designed to increase productivity should have but one aim: to serve human nature. They should reduce inequities, elimi-

nate discrimination, free men from the bonds of servitude, and thus give them the capacity, in the sphere of temporal realities, to improve their lot, to further their moral growth and to develop their spiritual endowments. When we speak of development, we should mean social progress as well as economic growth . . . Economics and technology are meaningless if they do not benefit man, for it is he they are to serve. Man is truly human only if he is the master of his own actions and the judge of their worth, only if he is the architect of his own progress. He must act according to his God-given nature, freely accepting its potentials and its claims upon him. (para. 34)

For Paul VI, the adjective *human* is equal in importance to the substantive *development*. He insisted, “Development cannot be limited to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be complete: integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every person and of the whole person” (para. 20). The end of development is the good of human beings as subjects, not as passive objects. Given this appreciation for subjectivity, the proper focus of development should focus not on what *happens* to individuals, but on what persons *are able to do*, both individually and in community. The human person should be the subject, the protagonist, of development.

Earlier I traced how different development ideologies have affected the conceptions of schooling in Tanzania. Reflecting on the present realities of modern life in Tanzania in light of some principles and themes of CST, leads me to turn my attention to the proper response of the Church to the educational realities in the developing world more generally. Because such an application of CST cannot properly remain just an intellectual or cognitive exercise if it is to be authentic, I have developed five principles to inform decision-making regarding Catholic schooling in developing countries.

### Five Principles for Establishing Catholic Schools in Developing Countries

Considering my attempts to clarify the mission of a Catholic school opening in the face of such challenges as described above provided me with an opportunity to begin to discern principles to be considered in initiating educational projects in the developing world. I do not claim that this list of five principles is complete, only that my experience and analysis suggest that they are worth taking seriously when considering inaugurating a Catholic educational project in a developing country. In formulating these principles,

I have looked to CST and the thought of Julius Nyerere. Though his thought is hardly representative of every leader in the developing world, it does have the advantage of being informed by CST. Nyerere's familiarity with the social teaching of the Church is evident from his 1970 correspondence with Fr. Robert Rweyemamu, the General Secretary of the Tanzanian Episcopal Conference at the time. Nyerere protested the lack of support for his program from the Catholic bishops, noting in particular the deleterious affect of their booklet *Huu Ndio Uhuru*—This is Freedom:

It is a translation of *Divini Redemptoris*, the encyclical on communism issued by Pope Pius XI. This is the point I want to make. The booklet is published in 1970, and I ask now—why should the Catholic Church be preaching (against) Communism in 1970? The Encyclical was written in 1932.... I still ask why not publish and preach *Populorum Progressio*? Why not be positive and preach social justice? I am sorry about my own Church, she is negative instead of positive. If she preached social justice positively, there would be no communism. If she condemns communism by words, this is no solution. (Nyerere, quoted in Ludwig, 1999, p. iii)

Orobator (2008) wrote of “theology brewed in an African pot.” I cannot claim that these principles have been brewed in an African pot, but I hope that the thought of Nyerere serves as a “yeast” from the developing world to help with the “fermentation” of the following five principles. Catholic schools in developing countries should be committed to: (a) the integral human formation of students, (b) the recognition of the social nature of learning, (c) a preferential option for the poor, (d) the common good, and (e) a broad view of the purpose of Catholic education that matches contemporary understandings of missiology.

### **I. Integral Human Formation**

*Catholic schooling should have as its principal concern integral human formation rather than training.*

Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, and Goldberg (1995) recounted how among Latino families the Spanish word *educación* differs in connotation from the English word *education*. *Educación* is holistic; it encompasses social and ethical formation in addition to the presentation of subject-specific content to

students. Training, on the other hand, focuses on discrete skills; it values and prioritizes efficiency and not the integral formation of the student. The idea of training for discrete skills is based on the early twentieth-century manufacturing innovations to increase efficiency introduced by Henry Ford and Frederick Winslow Taylor.

Much like the worker on the assembly line, students whose schooling is marked by efficiency and training experiences become alienated from their own education. Unlike the training model that conceives of students as objects of instruction for narrow purposes, the vision of CST conceives schooling as a means to educate human persons for action that issues from themselves as responsible social agents. Both in their practice and in advocacy, Catholic schools in developing countries should provide an explicit critique of deficient educational models and practices that disempower students—the sort of educational practices that quash instead of develop critical skills and intellectual interests, that fail to recognize and appreciate the strengths and cultures and prior knowledge of students, and that alienate them from schooling, requiring them to follow a curriculum that has no relevance to their lives (Shor, 1992).

The role of school in personal development and identity formation cannot be underestimated. Participation in learning environments forms personal identity (Connell, 2010, 2013; Martin & McLellan, 2013; Packer & Goicoechea, 2000). How students are thought about affects decision-making about what their education should look like; therefore, the establishment of Catholic schools in a developing country must be formed by an adequate understanding and promotion of the human person. Like the axiom that states that an incorrect view of the human person will inevitably lead to an inadequate economic theory, a similar educational axiom asserts that an incorrect view of the human person will lead to an inadequate theory of education (Himes, 2008). Catholic schools must offer a vision of the learner, the goal of learning, and the activity of learning different from the human capital model.

Paul VI in *Populorum Progressio* (1967) insisted that development “cannot be restricted to economic growth alone; it must foster the development of each man and of the whole man” (para. 14). Nyerere (2004e) likewise insisted that the proper role of education is to

contribute to an enlargement of Man’s ability in every way. In particular it has to help men to decide for themselves—in cooperation—what development is. It must help men to think clearly; it must enable them to

examine the possible alternative courses of action; to make a choice between those alternatives in keeping with their own purposes; and it must equip them with the ability to translate their decisions into reality. (p.135)

The proper role of a school is to foster the subjectivity of students, not simply to serve as training centers for attendees to acquire skills for job-related tasks or functional activities. In accordance with their mission, Catholic schools in developing countries must devote themselves to an integral formation of their students that encompasses not only instruction in content areas but also social and ethical formation.

## **2. The Nature and Purpose of Learning**

*Learning should be conceived as a social activity with social effects, involving the transformation of students in their ability to make sound judgments based on the critical appraisal of information and their commitment to serve the common good.*

Learning is often conceived as acquiring knowledge, which is considered a possession to be exploited. Influenced by neoliberal ideology, knowledge is treated as a commodity, a possession that can be amassed and measured (Freire, 1970). In turn, *the possession* of knowledge becomes the measure of the productivity of the individual. To have learned more—*having* more knowledge—is to be more successful than those who have not. The emphasis is put on *knowledge* as a *private good* (rivalrous and excludable) rather than on *knowing* as an *activity* associated with being in the world. Like other marketed commodities, learning becomes scarce, and competition becomes a necessary part of learning, and the desire for profit trumps the desire to share subsistence in the presence of scarcity, or the perception of it (Connell, 2013; Illich, 1978; Varenne & McDermott, 1998). The Church offers a different vision of knowledge and the role of schooling:

Education is not given for the purpose of gaining power, but as an aid towards a fuller understanding of, and communion with, man, events and things. Knowledge is not to be considered as a means of material prosperity and success, but as a call to serve and to be responsible for others. (Congregation for Catholic Education para. 56)

Nyerere (2004b) echoed the altruistic goals of education in ESR:

[The education provided by Tanzania for the students of Tanzania] must encourage the development of a proud, independent and free citizenry which relies upon itself for its own development, and which knows the advantages and the problems of co-operation. It must ensure that the educated know themselves to be an integral part of the nation and recognize the responsibility to give greater service the greater the opportunities they have had. (pp. 87–88).

As he noted elsewhere, “Education for self-reliance is not education for selfishness” (Nyerere, 2004c, p. 164).

For Nyerere, the purpose of education is liberation because education engages what genuinely and authentically makes human beings who they are, who they are meant to be. Its purpose is not “the development of objects—whether they be pyramids, or irrigation ditches, railways or palaces” (Nyerere, 2004a, p. 126). As he noted, “The purpose of education is not to turn out technicians who can be used as instruments in the expansion of the economy. It is to turn out men who have the technical knowledge and ability to expand the economy for the benefit of man in society” (p. 126).

Education is never politically neutral: It either domesticates learners into naturalized notions of social inequality or liberates them, allowing them to reflect on the world and transform it toward a more equitable and compassionate end (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). As Nyerere (2004e) noted, the skills and ideas that are taught should be liberating. “Nothing else can properly be called education. Teaching which induces a slave mentality or a sense of impotence is not education at all—it is an attack on the minds of men” (p. 135). Education must foster the agency of citizens for civic engagement.

One principal way in which education fosters such engagement is to prepare students to be truly humanized social agents in the world—what Paulo Freire (1970) referred to as our vocation. A major function of schools in this regard is to prepare students who can critique, expose, and challenge the naturalized assumptions about how the world is ordered. As Nyerere (2004d) noted:

We now have no alternative but to apply ourselves scientifically and objectively to the problems of our country. We have to think; and then act on our thinking. We have to recognize the facts and conditions that

exist. We have to recognize the poverty, the ignorance, the disease, the social attitudes and the political atmosphere that exist, and in that context think about what we want to do and how we can move from the existing situation towards one which we like better. (p. 20)

In ESR, he proposed the same:

[Citizens] have to be able to think for themselves, to make judgments on all the issues affecting them; they have to be able to interpret the decisions made through the democratic institutions of our society, and to implement them in the light of the peculiar local circumstances where they happen to live. (Nyerere, 2004b, p. 73)

I mentioned earlier that Nyerere was familiar with the primary sources of CST. For that reason, the similarities between what he described as recognizing, thinking, and acting, and Cardijn's "see, judge, act" as it appears in John XXIII's *Mater et Magistra* (1961, para. 236) should be no surprise. The Catholic school in the developing world must be committed to a pedagogy that gives its students a method by which they can be attuned to what is happening in society in order to act more justly.

### 3. A Preferential Option for the Poor

*Catholic schools should focus on empowering the poorest people in society rather than focus on economic growth that often benefits the wealthy and creates an increasing gap between the rich and the poor.*

In its recent report *Humanity Divided* (2013), the UN Development Programme Bureau for Development Policy noted that in spite of the impressive progress made on many fronts over the decades, humanity still remains deeply divided. The report indicated in particular that wealth and income inequalities deleteriously affect attempts to achieve development outcomes and expand the opportunities and abilities of people. Increased inequalities distort national and global economic and political processes with the effect that these processes progressively adapt themselves to entrenched elites. This dynamic of social reproduction excludes many citizens from having a say in the very decisions that impact them, and it compromises their ability to live lives they value (Sen, 1999).

The preferential option for the poor is an option for inclusion; it is a decision to “safeguard the value of human life” by rejecting “an economy of exclusion and inequality” (Francis, 2013, para 53). As Hollenbach (1979) pointed out, the option for the poor involves making choices based on three moral standards: (a) that “the needs of the poor take priority over the wants of the rich”; (b) that “the freedom of the dominated takes priority over the liberty of the powerful”; and (c) that “the participation of marginalized groups takes priority over the preservation of an order which excludes them” (p. 204). *The Catholic School* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977) articulated this priority relative to the Church’s educational institutions:

[F]irst and foremost the Church offers its educational service to the poor or those who are deprived of family help and affection or those who are far from the faith. Since education is an important means of improving the social and economic condition of the individual and of peoples, if the Catholic school were to turn its attention exclusively or predominantly to those from the wealthier social classes, it could be contributing towards maintaining their privileged position, and could thereby continue to favor a society which is unjust. (para. 58)

Though schools have traditionally been thought of as institutions promoting equality of opportunity, research over the last half century indicates that, in fact, schools are almost universally institutions that reinforce and reproduce social inequalities. The truth of the matter is that education reforms have for the most part completely failed to reduce these inequalities (Collins, 2009). The reality that schooling has not lived up to its promise to reduce inequalities, however, does not provide the Church with an excuse to do nothing, and making the education of the poor its priority is a reasonable place to start.

To be committed to the poor is a greater challenge than it seems at first glance. To be committed to the poor means foregoing the competitive search for the best academically prepared students with the greatest prospects to succeed. Excellence must be redefined at a school that commits itself to the poor; in light of the first principle presented above, its focus must be more comprehensive than academic success. No longer can the school simply look at performance on national examinations as an indicator of its success because such examinations assess a very narrow band of what a good school should value.

In “The Job of Teachers is Revolution,” a 1969 address, Nyerere (2006) railed against the testing and credentialing culture of schools:

If you teachers go on preparing our youths merely for examinations you will be true colonial teachers. You must be teachers who teach people to change Africa. To change Africa you don’t have to give the pupil a certificate. By looking at the pupil you should know that wherever he goes he can “shake them,” that is, he can do something good for the country. (p. 83)

Nyerere made clear that to be effective, educators must be politically conscious so that they can see through the relationships of power inherent in the dominant curriculum and the mutual relations between the school’s culture and societal culture (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Giroux, 1997). Like Freire (1970), he prioritized “consciousness-raising,” a process “in which men, not as recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deep awareness both of the sociocultural reality which shapes their lives and of the capacity to transform that reality” (p. 27).

The measure of success of a school (and more generally of schooling) is, in fact, very straightforward. It begins by asking, “Is learning happening?” Though seemingly straightforward, the measure is not simple. The UNESCO publication *Learning: The Treasure Within* (Delors, 1996) distinguished four pillars of learning—learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be. In the sort of holistic education delineated in the second principle above, all four pillars are developed—and all four pillars are assessed. For economically poor students, who arrive at schools with neither the social nor cultural capital of a country’s elite, the focus on “learning to know” and its attendant obsession with ranking on national tests is insufficient and unjust.

Socrates said, “All great undertakings are risky, and, as they say, what is worthwhile is always difficult” (Plato, 2003, p. 220). If Catholic educators are going to be effective in their educational mission in developing countries, they must be willing to risk losing the prestige of sponsoring elite schools and accept great challenges in the service and inclusion of the poor.

#### 4. The Common Good and Solidarity

*Catholic schools should contribute to the broad benefit of society and foster solidarity.*

One of the central tenets of CST is the priority of the common good. Massaro (2000) explained:

to speak of the common good is to recognize that there are numerous proper goals in life beyond our own private benefits. Responsible people look for opportunities to contribute to worthy causes and to improve society in many ways, even when the benefits of this progress will go primarily to others . . . everyone has an obligation to promote the common good by making whatever contributions are necessary to improve the lives of others. (p. 85).

This understanding of the common good suggests that decisions regarding the inauguration and operation of a Catholic school should challenge the dominant neoliberal societal ethos and the conditions that foster a culture that promotes individual autonomy and frustrates the cultivation of the virtues of active citizenship and public service that are crucial for a functioning participatory democracy.

Catholic schools are places that cannot serve the autonomous, monadic self, since their ultimate duty is to prepare students for a life that transcends the self, for a life centered on devotion to the common good and to improving the collective conditions of human life. Nyerere (2004b) derided “an elitist education designed to meet the interests and needs of a very small proportion of those who enter the school system” (p. 74). Instead, he encouraged an education that would help citizens to “organize themselves co-operatively and work for themselves through working for the community of which they are members” (p. 72). He insisted:

[The education system] has to foster the social goals of living together, and working together, for the common good. It has to prepare our young people to play a dynamic and constructive part in the development of a society in which all members share fairly in the good or bad fortune of the group, and in which progress is measured in terms of human well-being, not prestige buildings, cars, or other such things, whether privately or publicly owned. (2004b, p. 72)

Nyerere provided a good counsel to those planning to open a school in a developing country: The school personnel should take seriously the school's important role in instilling among its students a sense of commitment to the total community and an ability to cooperate with others on the basis of equality for their common purposes.

### 5. A Broad View of Catholic Mission

*Because commitment to human dignity, the common good, and a preferential option for the poor are values from which the wider society can benefit, the service of Catholic schools in developing countries should extend beyond the Catholic, or even Christian, community.*

Phan (2001) discussed four foundational theological factors related to the Church's mission: proclamation, reign of God, church, and mission. Regarding proclamation, he noted that for the Church, the content of this proclamation is necessarily and primarily the truth that Jesus is Lord. Phan (2001) noted that, historically, what has been meant by *proclamation* is the "verbal announcement of the 'good news,' written and/or oral" (p. 6). Phan (2001) continued by pointing out that in *Ecclesia in Asia* (1999) John Paul II re-affirmed both the necessity and primacy of proclamation without emphasizing the exclusive use of words or doctrinal formulas to convey the Christian understanding of Jesus as savior. Not only did John Paul II insist on the appropriateness of narrative and dialogue for proclamation, but he also gave prominence to Christian life itself as proclamation:

Renunciation, detachment, humility, simplicity and silence are considered great values by the followers of all religions. Lest prayer be divorced from human promotion, the Synod Fathers insisted that "the work of justice, charity and compassion is interrelated with a genuine life of prayer and contemplation, and indeed it is this same spirituality that will be the wellspring of all our evangelizing work". (para. 23)

This approach echoes the earlier exhortation in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) of Paul VI, who insisted that "the Gospel must be proclaimed by witness" (para. 21), which tacit proclamation of the Gospel he judged both "very powerful and effective" (para. 21).

This understanding of mission resists parochialism. Roman Catholic missiology in the postconciliar era has shifted away from a church-centered

paradigm to one centered on the reign of God, with the Church as an instrument of this reign, showing to the world the way God is active in it (Phan, 2001). This new emphasis on the reign of God involves the humanization of society as much as expansion of the Church. It is for this reason that Benedict XVI (2008) could tell a group of Catholic educators, “The Church’s primary mission of evangelization, in which educational institutions play a crucial role, is consonant with a nation’s fundamental aspiration to develop a society truly worthy of the human person’s dignity” (para. 10).

Schools—and other ministries—in this postconciliar age are no longer vehicles for proselytism or Catholic triumphalism; rather, they are considered the means of a different sort of evangelism that is reminiscent of Crowe’s (1989) proposal that we reconsider the way Christians think about how God enters into history.

Commonly we think of God first sending the Son, and the Spirit being sent in that context, to bring to completion the work of the Son. [My] thesis says that, on the contrary, God first sent the Spirit, and then sent the Son in the context of the Spirit’s mission, to bring to completion . . . the work which God conceived as one work to be executed in two steps of the twofold mission of first the Spirit and then the Son. (pp. 325–326)

The implication of this approach is that, in a very real sense, the Christian community together with world religions is a community because of “our common orientation to the mystery of love and awe through the indwelling Holy Spirit who is given to us” (Crowe, 1989, p. 335). In light of this, Catholic school’s religious mission to non-Catholics is to cultivate love and awe.

In the certainty that the Spirit is at work in every person, the Catholic school offers itself to all, non-Christians included, with all its distinctive aims and means, acknowledging, preserving and promoting the spiritual and moral qualities, the social and cultural values, which characterize different civilizations. (*The Catholic School*, 1977, para. 85)

The Catholic school testifies to the inherent value of each human being. This testimony is itself an evangelical act.

In an address to Maryknoll missionaries, Nyerere (1973) boldly stated, “I refuse to imagine a God who is poor (destitute), ignorant, superstitious, fearful, oppressed, wretched—which is the lot of the majority of those he created in

his own image" (p. 216). Catholic schools in the developing world should be places that foster critical awareness of one's social reality through reflection and action (Freire, 1970) and that foster human dignity, nurture freedom, and promote a fully human life. Such commitments will help to realize a genuine communion among members and thereby serve as a beacon of hope to the world.

The word *principle* can mean both a fundamental truth on the conceptual level and a rule or tenet. In the years subsequent to the school's founding, I have had to find my consolation in the first meaning. These principles have served as a "moral vision," giving the school its purpose, a sense of ideals, and a trajectory established by these aspirational goals not yet fully realized. These principles based in Catholic social teaching and the thought of Julius Kambarage Nyerere have offered the school's students and their families and its faculty and staff a discourse for articulating the means and ends of schooling as they negotiate the realities of a world marked by the dominance of the market and the individual and the passing of any sense of the public good or community.

### **In Conclusion**

When I returned from my work in Tanzania, I found myself turning my anthropological gaze to the material of everyday life in the United States of America. My return has provided me with an opportunity to consider the mission of Catholic education in a postindustrial, neoliberal world. In *Culture Against Man* (1963), Henry described schools as "the heartbeat of the culture" (p. 321), places "where children are drilled in cultural orientations, and where subject matter becomes to a very considerable extent the instrument for instilling them" (p. 320). By their nature as such places, schools embody and express the central obsessions of the wider social sphere. In schools in the US, these obsessions include individualism, the commodification of learning, competition, and meritocracy.

Without realizing it at the time, I began writing this article in the middle of Tanzania as I faced the challenge of establishing a Catholic school in circumstances where expectations for what the school would provide did not accord with what I perceived as its mission *as a school*. My motive for writing this article and for formulating the principles delineated above was to provide a resource for others involved in Church-sponsored educational initiatives in the developing world, using not only CST but also the thought of a respected leader from the developing world to do so. What has occurred to me in the

course of writing the principles is that they can also serve as criteria for assessing Catholic schools more generally.

CST is now part of the curriculum at most Catholic schools (See for instance USCCB Task Force on Catholic Social Teaching's *From the Ground Up: Teaching Catholic Social Principles*, 1999), but the best, most authentic and effective lesson in CST is for members of the school community—whether situated in a place like Tanzania or a place like the US—to see how the social teachings of the Church can be brought to bear on school mission and the attendant policies, procedures, curricula, and operative pedagogies in order to contribute to a more just world.

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